



MARKET HARBOROUGH
URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL

ANNUAL REPORT

ON THE

Health and Sanitary State of
the District for the Year

1952

BY

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MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

AND

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SANITARY INSPECTOR

THOMAS BARNES

MARKET HARBOROUGH URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL.

ANNUAL REPORT
of the Medical Officer of Health and the
Sanitary Inspector for 1952.

Gentlemen,

We have the honour to present our Annual Report for the year ended 31st December, 1952.

STATISTICS.

Area (in acres)	4,771
Population (Registrar General's Estimate) ...	10,240
Number of inhabited houses	3,331
Rateable Value	£69,747
Sum represented by penny rate	£278

INDUSTRIES.

No new industries have been started, but employment in existing industries has been fully maintained.

VITAL STATISTICS.

	Male	Female	Total
Live Births : Legitimate	76	73	149
Illegitimate	1	2	3
	—	—	—
	77	75	152
	—	—	—
Still Births : Legitimate	1	1	2
Illegitimate	—	—	—
	—	—	—
	1	1	2
	—	—	—
Deaths of infants under 1 year : Legitimate	2	1	3
Illegitimate	—	—	—
	—	—	—
	2	1	3
	—	—	—

Deaths of infants			
under 4 weeks : Legitimate	—	1	1
Illegitimate	—	—	—
	—	—	—
	—	1	1
	—	—	—
Deaths (all ages)	51	59	110

			England and Wales
	1952	1951	1952
Live Birth Rate (per 1,000 population) :	15.3	15.3	15.3
Still Birth Rate („ „ „) :	.19	.29	.35
Death Rate („ „ „) :	10.7	12.3	11.3
Infant Mortality			
Rate („ „ Live Births) :	26.3	12.7	27.6

Population :—There is a decrease of 70 people in the town since last year.

Death Rate :—Is 1.6 per 1,000 population less than last year, and is still below the average for England and Wales.

Infant Mortality Rate :—Although twice as high as last year, is below the average for the Country.

Puerperal Fever :—There were no deaths from puerperal causes.

Causes of Death :—The chief causes of death were :—

Cancer	...	...	...	...	11
Cerebral Haemorrhage	...	...	...	...	11
Heart Diseases	...	...	...	...	34
Other Circulatory Diseases	...	...	...	...	10
Bronchitis	...	...	...	...	7
Pneumonia	...	...	...	...	3
Tuberculosis	...	...	...	...	5
Motor Accidents	...	...	...	...	4

There were no deaths from any other infectious disease or suicide.

HEALTH SERVICES.

Laboratory Facilities :—The following examinations were carried out by the Public Health Laboratory Service :—

Throat and Nose swabs	...	...	...	5
Faeces and Urine	...	...	...	48
Sputa	...	...	...	28
Milks	...	...	...	50
Waters	...	...	...	8
Ice Creams	...	...	...	10
Whooping Cough	...	...	...	4
Miscellaneous	...	...	...	22
				—
			Total	175
				—

Other Health Services :—

The Day Nursery,
 District Midwifery and Home Nursing,
 Ante-Natal Clinics,
 Maternity and Child Welfare Clinic,
 Health Visiting,
 Diphtheria Immunisation,
 Ambulance Service and
 Home Help Service

are administered by the County Health Authority, and have been active throughout the year. Under this Authority the local doctors are on call for the Midwifery Service and attend the ante-natal clinics, and carry out the Diphtheria Immunisation. During the year 121 children had primary immunisation and 101 received the "booster" dose.

The Market Harborough and District Hospital and St. Luke's Hospital were administered by Leicester No. 1 Hospital Management Committee and were attended by the local doctors.

*County Mass Radiography Unit :—*This Unit spent a week in the town and made 3,465 X-Ray examinations. As a direct result, several early cases of Pulmonary Tuberculosis were discovered. The visit was in every way beneficial and was much appreciated.

Health Service Officers :—

- 1 Medical Officer of Health (Part-time).
- 1 Sanitary Inspector (Whole-time).
- 1 Additional Sanitary Inspector (Whole-time).

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA.

*Water :—*The quality of the public piped supply has been satisfactory and there has been no shortage during the year. Six samples of water going into supply were examined bacteriologically at the Public Health Laboratory and the reports in all cases were satisfactory. The water is not liable to have plumbo-solvent action.

A copy of the report of the Public Health Laboratory dated 27th November, 1952, regarding the last sample from the town main, is appended :—

"Bacteriologically this sample is satisfactory for domestic purposes."

No extension of public water supplies has been carried out during 1952, and no further progress has been made in the scheme for the construction of additional works. The latter scheme provides for central control and doubling the present quantity, and includes provision for supplying parishes in the Market Harborough and Lutterworth Rural Districts. The final approval of the Minister to this scheme is still awaited.

The present water supply to dwelling-houses in the district is as follows :—

	Houses	Population
Number supplied from wells ...	18	55
Number supplied from public water mains :—		
(a) Direct to the houses ...	3,140	9,624
(b) By means of standpipes	183	561

Fifteen samples from private wells, which supply the above 18 houses, were chemically tested and all were found to be free from pollution. The piped supply was substituted for well water at 6 houses.

Drainage and Sewerage :—No alterations or extensions to sewers have been made during the year.

Closet Accommodation :—One hundred and thirty-seven water closets have been constructed and connected to the sewerage system, making a total of approximately 4,780 in the district. Eighteen premises situated outside the sewered areas, are provided with chemical closets, etc.

Public Cleansing :—Dustbins are used for the storage of refuse at all houses and other premises. The Municipal Dustbin Supply Scheme whereby dustbins are provided and maintained by the Council at a charge of 5/- each per year, has continued to operate satisfactorily. As a result of notices served in respect of worn-out bins, 145 new dustbins have been provided, and of this number 44 were supplied under the scheme. Domestic refuse is collected weekly and two S.D. freighter motor vehicles, 1 full-time and 1 part-time, are used for the purpose. The collection of trade refuse is also undertaken from 83 shops and other premises, for which service a charge is made in accordance with the Council's scale. The total quantity of refuse received at the Council's Destructor Depot was 2,991 tons approximately, and of this amount the following materials were salvaged :—

	Tons	Cwts.	Qrs.
Paper	5	2	3
Metals	78	8	0
Textiles	13	3	0
Bones	4	1	1
	—	—	—
	100	15	0
	—	—	—

The market for paper ceased early in the year and this explains the considerable drop in the amount salvaged. On the other hand, the quantity of metals has increased and consequently the total tonnage of all materials is only slightly below that for 1951.

SANITARY INSPECTION OF THE AREA.

Complaints received and investigated	...	...	286
Defects or nuisances dealt with	...	...	689
Informal Notices served	...	...	247
Statutory Notices served	...	...	110

Inspections :—

	1st Visits	2nd Visits
Animals Keeping	19	31
Bakehouses	5	7
Dairies	6	67
Dwelling-houses	436	388
Factories, etc.	62	13
Food Premises	128	130
Offensive Trades	2	6
Rodent Control	2,428	1,502
Shops	13	9
Slaughterhouse and Meat Inspection ...	1	376
Tents, Vans, Sheds, etc.	6	16
Verminous Premises	100	63
Water Supplies	16	3
Other premises	127	194
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	3,349	2,805
	<hr/>	<hr/>

Factories, etc. :—

Sanitary accommodation provided or improved	...	3
Drainage and other defects remedied	...	5
Matters referred by H.M. Inspector	...	3

Shops :—

Heating arrangements improved	...	1
Drainage defects rectified	...	2
Other defects remedied	...	3

Miscellaneous Nuisances :—

Drains and sanitary fittings tested	...	9
Drains repaired or unstopped	...	10
Offensive accumulations removed	...	22
Dangerous structure made safe	...	1
Other defects remedied	...	16

The composting of large quantities of horse manure in the vicinity of private houses and the service of a Statutory Notice under Section 92 (1) (d) of the Public Health Act, 1936, was referred to in the last Annual Report, and has been kept under close observation. As a result of new mechanical methods being adopted, the Council are at present unable to suggest a "better practicable means" of reducing further the smell which to a degree must inevitably accompany this horticultural operation. Whilst the Council appreciate the feelings of the householders hereby, the sixteen complaints (some based on noise) investigated during the year must be regarded within the limitations imposed by this "best practicable means" clause. The Council will continue by co-operation and persuasion to endeavour to minimise any cause for further complaint.

Complaints were received of a nuisance arising from a large number of dead sheep, which were lying in and around a building in a field in near proximity to a public footpath. Upon inspection it was found that many of the bodies were in an advanced state of decomposition, and that they were being accumulated and stored for the purpose of food for hounds; also the premises were in a foul and neglected condition. As a result of action taken by the Health Department, the building was repaired, cleansed, linewashed and rendered bird and rodent-proof and sprayed with insecticide/DDT. The carcasses were dressed and hung inside the building, and offals, etc., and some of the older carcasses removed. When the number in storage had been reduced to reasonable proportions, arrangements were made as far as possible for smaller quantities to be obtained in fresh condition and for a desirable standard of cleanliness to be maintained. No further complaints have been received.

Pet Animals Act, 1951 :—

This Act commenced to operate on April 1st and provides for the licensing of "pet shops" on premises where the business of selling animals as pets is carried on. The conditions of licence adopted by the Council have been based upon the recommendations of the R.S.P.C.A. Several inspections of premises have been made and two licences have been issued, the premises having been brought up to the required standard.

Smoke Abatement :—

Complaints of smoke nuisances investigated	...	7
Observations of chimney emissions recorded	...	25
Visits to boiler, etc., plants	... ..	14
Nuisances abated as a result of improved firing methods	... ..	5
Cases under investigation by Ministry of Fuel and Power Advisory Service	... ..	2

Public Mortuary :—

This building in King's Road is owned, equipped and maintained by the Council. The Mortuary was used on seven occasions during the year. The premises are kept in a cleanly and hygienic condition by the Disinfecting Officer.

Disinfection and Disinfestation :—

Infected rooms fumigated	...	...	...	...	51
Verminous rooms treated	...	...	...	...	135
Articles of bedding, clothing, etc. :—					
Steam disinfected	...	...	...	...	155
Destroyed	...	...	...	...	193
Other articles disinfected, etc.	...	...	...	...	29
Number of instances of bug infestation :—					
Council Houses	...	...	...	...	0
Other Houses	...	...	...	...	0
Other infestations of domestic pests treated :—					
Ants	...	...	...	...	40
Cockroaches	...	...	...	...	6
Crickets	...	...	...	...	10
Fleas	...	...	...	...	2
Flies	...	...	...	...	5
Lice	...	...	...	...	1
Mosquitos	...	...	...	...	3
Silverfish	...	...	...	...	3
Wasps	...	...	...	...	10
Wood boring insects	...	...	...	...	32
Miscellaneous	...	...	...	...	8

Rodent Control :—

Considerable attention has continued to be given to this important work, and the district has again been covered in routine inspections by the Rodent Officer, who combines these duties with those of disinfection, pest destruction, trade refuse collection, etc. Frequent visits have been made to premises especially liable to rodent infestation, and 38 trade premises are under regular supervision at the request of the occupiers. Many of the older properties, since being repaired and rat-proofed, have remained free from re-infestation. The new poison "Warfarin" has been particularly successful in destroying mice and has largely replaced the older method of trapping.

Ninety-two manholes of the sewerage system, representing approximately one manhole in every five, have been test-baited, and for the fourth successive year no takes of bait were recorded. All manhole covers of the entire system were lifted and oiled and the manholes inspected for defects as a routine measure, and no evidence of the presence of rats was found.

Number of infestations dealt with :—(Rats 179;						
Mice 26)	...	...	...	...	...	205
(1) At Council properties	...	...	...	...	...	28
(2) At private dwellings (free of charge)	...	...	...	...	...	118
(3) At business premises (occupiers charged)	...	...	...	...	...	59
Number of pre-baits laid	...	...	...	...	...	4,467
Number of poison baits laid	...	...	...	...	...	1,563
Estimated number of rats killed (Ministry	...	...	...	...	...	...
Formula)	...	...	...	...	...	2,654
Buildings ratproofed, etc.	...	...	...	...	...	6

Special Classes of Premises and Occupations subject to Control :—

Written Consent to establishment of trade of Rag	...	...	...	...	...	...
and Bone Dealer renewed	...	...	...	...	...	1
Written Consent to establishment of trade of Fat	...	...	...	...	...	...
Extractor, Fat Melter and Glue Maker in	...	...	...	...	...	...
operation	...	...	...	...	...	1

The storage of excessive quantities of raw material at the latter premises, referred to in the last Annual Report, was considerably less at the commencement of the year, and by early Summer and since, the quantity has not exceeded the normal immediate needs of the processes carried on.

Periodic visits of inspection were made to both of the above premises, and the various requirements of the Byelaws were discussed with the respective firms, whose co-operation was sought in maintaining a satisfactory standard.

Storage of Petroleum Spirit :—

Number of Licences issued	...	...	...	...	...	1
Number of Licences renewed	...	...	...	...	...	37
Number of Licences transferred	...	...	...	...	...	1
Number of contraventions rectified	...	...	...	...	...	6

Three of the above Licences include the storage of cellulose solutions. No Licences have been issued for the storage of carbide of calcium.

Swimming Bath :—

The Council's well-equipped indoor swimming pool has continued to provide admirable facilities for bathers during the Summer and can be regarded as an important amenity to the district. Evidence that this provision is appreciated by members of the general public, schools, clubs and organised parties is indicated by the fact that the number of bathers admitted during the season was 31,104. Every attention is given in order to supply a healthy recreation under hygienic conditions. The purity of the water is maintained by a continuous filtration and chlorination installation, and frequent tests of the water are made to ensure efficient working. A sample taken for bacteriological analysis in mid-summer was reported as sterile.

Camping Sites and Moveable Dwellings :—

Number of camping sites for which licences have been issued	...	...	...	...	...	...	0
Number of licences issued for moveable dwellings under Section 269, Public Health Act, 1936	...						1

Attention has continued to be given to sanitation in connection with pleasure fairs, travelling shows and local events in the open air. Usually suitable sanitary accommodation has been provided by the proprietors or occupiers, but in one instance some of the portable chemical conveniences used at the recent Inland Waterways Rally were utilised, a charge being made for the erection, dismantling and hire. This equipment will be available in other similar instances in the future, and will constitute a much needed improvement in this respect. In all cases, servicing is carried out free, together with the removal of refuse as a normal routine. During the year, 14 fairs, shows, etc., came under observation, and in 4 cases steps were taken to deal with contraventions. Inspections were made also of canal boats used for pleasure trips and several improvements were effected.

Rag Flock and Other Filling Materials Act, 1951 :—

Number of premises registered for upholstering, etc.							1
Number of premises licensed for :—							
(a) Manufacture	...	...	...	...	...	...	0
(b) Storage of rag flock	...	...	...	...	...	...	0

HOUSING.

During the year, ninety-five houses have been erected, as follows :—

			Council	Private Enterprise
Pre-fabricated—temporary	...	...	0	0
Pre-fabricated—permanent	...	...	0	0
Permanent construction	...	...	80	15

The total number of houses completed during the seven Post-War years (1946-1952) is 380, and this figure includes 27 pre-fabricated temporary houses, 256 permanent Council houses and 97 houses erected by private enterprise. In addition, 31 flats have been provided by conversion of existing dwellings and other buildings during the same period.

At the close of the year, fifty-three permanent houses were in course of construction, *viz.* forty-two by the Council and eleven by private enterprise.

Since the official opening of the new Southern Estate in February, 1951, rapid progress has been made in the erection of houses and at the end of 1952, 134 houses were completed.

During the year, 141 new applications were received for Council houses, and the total number of applicants on the list at the end of the year was 396.

The conversion of four unfit semi-detached houses into two fit houses has been completed. One house, previously closed, but which had been licensed for several years for temporary use under the Defence Regulations 68AA, has been vacated and closed. Action has been taken under Section 12 of the Housing Act, 1936, regarding an unfit house being part of a building, and an undertaking accepted to close, with the result that the dwelling has since been vacated and closed.

The reconditioning of an unfit house, in respect of which an improvement grant under the Housing Act, 1949, of £245 12s. 6d. was approved in 1951, has been completed. One similar application was received during 1952 and the necessary sanction given for a grant of £88 10s. 0d.

The following repairs at dwelling-houses have been carried out in compliance with informal notices :—

Dampness remedied	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	18
General structural repairs effected	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	59
Drains and sanitary fittings repaired or new provided	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	72
Cleansing and other items remedied	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	47

1. *Inspection of Dwelling Houses during the year :—*

(1) (a) Total number of dwelling houses inspected for housing defects (under Public Health or Housing Acts)	187
(b) Number of inspections made for the purpose	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	334
(2) (a) Number of dwelling houses (included under sub-head (1) above) which were inspected and recorded under the Housing Consolidated Regulations 1925 and 1932	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
(b) Number of inspections made for the purpose	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	3

(3)	Number of dwelling houses found to be so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation	2
(4)	Number of dwelling houses (exclusive of those referred to under the preceding sub-head) found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation	39
2.	<i>Remedy of defects during the year without Service of Formal Notices.</i>	
	Number of defective dwelling houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by the Local Authority or their officers	39
3.	<i>Action under Statutory Powers.</i>	
	Proceedings under Section 12 of the Housing Act, 1936 ...	1
4.	<i>Housing Act, 1936—Part IV—Overcrowding.</i>	
(1)	(a) Number of dwellings overcrowded at end of year	17
	(b) Number of families dwelling therein	27
	(c) Number of persons dwelling therein	129
(2)	Number of new cases of overcrowding reported during the year	5
(3)	(a) Number of cases of overcrowding relieved during the year	16
	(b) Number of persons concerned in such cases ...	126
(4)	Particulars of any cases in which dwelling houses have again become overcrowded after the Local Authority have taken steps for the abatement of overcrowding ...	0
(5)	Number of cases where sleeping accommodation is inadequate, although the houses are not legally overcrowded	75

INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD.

Milk Supply :—

Trade	No on Register
Distributors of Milk	3
Dairies (not being Dairy Farms)	3

The following Licences have been issued :—

- | | | | | | |
|-----|---|-----|-----|-----|---|
| (1) | Milk (Special Designations) (Pasteurised and Sterilised Milk) Regulations, 1949 : | | | | |
| (a) | Dealers Licences : Pasteurised | ... | ... | ... | 1 |
| | Sterilised | ... | ... | ... | 1 |
| (b) | Supplementary Licences | ... | ... | ... | 0 |
| (2) | Milk (Special Designations) (Raw Milk) Regulations, 1949 : | | | | |
| (a) | Dealers Licences : Tuberculin Tested | ... | ... | | 3 |
| (b) | Supplementary Licences | ... | ... | ... | 0 |

Bacteriological Milk Sampling :—

Grade		Number of Samples for bacteriological examination	Number Satisfactory	Number Unsatisfactory
"Tuberculin Tested"	...	16	14	2
"Accredited"	... ..	0	0	0
"Pasteurised"	... ..	6	6	0
"Sterilised"	... ..	0	0	0
Ungraded	... ..	12	7	5
		—	—	—
		34	27	7
		—	—	—

The reports of the samples have revealed an improvement over last year's results, the proportion of satisfactory samples having increased from 73% to 80% and this has been largely due to the fact that 14 of the 16 samples of "Tuberculin Tested" milk passed the test. All of the "Pasteurised" samples were taken from dealers and were satisfactory. The two local Pasteurising Plants are licensed by the Leicestershire County Council, and one of these Plants came into operation and was newly licensed during the year after prolonged investigation into the cause of unsatisfactory samples commented upon in the last Annual Report. Frequent samples from these Plants have been collected by the County Health Department, and copies of the reports received have indicated that in the case of the older Plant all of the samples were satisfactory, and from the new Plant only one sample was unsatisfactory. With regard to the five unsatisfactory samples of ungraded milk, one producer has since given up business, two samples were of milk produced locally, and the remaining two were from outside the district. In all cases the retailer and Milk Production Officer have been notified of the results of the samples. Only a small amount of ungraded milk is now retailed. Seventy-three inspections of dairies, vehicles, etc., have been made during the year.

Biological Milk Sampling :—

The following samples were collected under the Leicestershire County Council Scheme :—

Number of samples taken	Number satisfactory	Number showing evidence of	
		Tubercle Bacilli	Brucella Abortus
16	14	0	2

Sampling was again limited to milk retailed in its raw state (other than heat-treated), and samples were taken at the farms and were representative of the bulk supply of each herd of dairy cows. The reports showed that in all instances evidence of living Tubercle Bacilli was absent.

In August a report was received notifying that a sample of milk from a herd of 26 cows had revealed the presence of *Brucella Abortus*. Immediate arrangements were made for the milk to be pasteurised, and in co-operation with the County Health Department, who undertook an investigation, and the Public Health Laboratory, samples from groups and later individual cows were subjected to the Whey Agglutination Test, with the result that one cow was segregated from the herd. Thereafter, weekly bulk samples proved negative and pasteurisation of the milk was accordingly discontinued. However, a further bulk sample in November was reported as positive, and as a result of immediate tests upon individual cows, four were segregated from the herd, and weekly bulk sampling from the remainder was being continued at the end of the year.

Ice Cream :—

Trade						Number of Premises Registered	
Manufacture and retail	...	...	...	...	...	1	
Manufacture only	...	...	...	...	...	0	
Retail only	...	...	...	...	...	27	
Certificates of Registration issued				...	...	4	

Ten samples of ice cream from eight different manufacturers were obtained for bacteriological examination by the Methylene Blue Test at the Public Health Laboratory, and the reports, together with those of the previous year, were as follows :—

				1951	1952
Grade 1	...	...	...	10	8
Grade 2	...	...	...	1	0
Grade 3	...	...	...	0	1
Grade 4	...	...	...	3	1
				—	—
				14	10
				—	—

With regard to the two unsatisfactory samples (in Grades 3 and 4), the dealers and manufacturers were informed and their co-operation sought with a view to improvement. Subsequent samples in both cases were Grade 1. Twenty-one inspections of premises and vehicles were made and three improvements were effected. Most of the ice cream is retailed in the pre-packed state.

Meat and Other Foods :—

Centralised slaughtering under the control of the Ministry of Food has continued in the Council's Slaughterhouse, Springfield Street, for the

past twelve years. During this period a total of 105,605 animals have been slaughtered. This establishment also serves as the distributing centre for the supply of meat to the town and adjoining three Rural Districts. The premises have been well maintained and every attention has been given to ensure a satisfactory food supply.

During the year under review 9,794 animals were slaughtered, and 377 visits were necessary for the purpose of routine examination of all carcasses and organs before release to retail premises. The total quantity of meat condemned as unfit for human consumption was 24 tons 2 cwt. 2½ qrs., and entailed the issue of 219 certificates. One Licence to Slaughter was issued under the Slaughter of Animals Act, 1933, and thirteen Licences were renewed.

CARCASSES INSPECTED AND CONDEMNED.

	Cattle excluding Cows	Cows	Calves	Sheep and Lambs	Pigs
Number killed and inspected	1,171	538	693	6,218	1,174
All diseases except Tuberculosis :—					
Whole carcasses condemned	6	9	13	105	9
Carcasses of which some part or organ was condemned	425	262	11	457	81
Percentage of the number inspected affected with disease other than Tuberculosis	36.8	50.4	3.5	9.0	7.7
Tuberculosis only :—					
Whole carcasses condemned	6	15	—	—	4
Carcasses of which some part or organ was condemned	87	109	—	—	40
Percentage of the number inspected affected with Tuberculosis	7.9	23.0	—	—	3.7

Foodstuffs of various kinds have been inspected during visits to food premises, and sixty-three requests from traders to examine doubtful or damaged commodities have been complied with. As a result, it was necessary to condemn as unfit for human food a total of 2,806 lbs. in respect of which 211 certificates were issued.

Ten premises are registered under Section 14 of the Food and Drugs Act, 1938, for the manufacture of preserved food.

Food premises have been visited on two hundred and fifty-eight occasions, and attention has been given to cleanliness in handling food and protection from contamination. The use of hot water, detergents and hypochlorites in the cleansing and sterilising of utensils and equipment was discussed with proprietors of catering and licensed establishments. During these visits, consideration has been given to the hygienic condition of the buildings, rodent and insect control, refuse storage and removal, and other matters. Generally, the conditions found have reached a high standard. In all, twenty-two defects have been remedied and improvements effected.

The films “The Good Housewife in her Kitchen” and “Insect Pests in Food” have been shown in local halls to interested audiences, and have contributed to the educational aspect of the campaign for clean food.

No cases of food poisoning were notified and no outbreaks have occurred during the year.

INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

Notifications :—

Scarlet Fever	...	...	...	8	Puerperal Fever	...	...	...	—
Ophthalmia Neonatorum	...	...	...	—	Puerperal Pyrexia	...	...	...	2
Anterior Poliomyelitis	...	...	...	—	Erysipelas	...	...	...	—
Lobar Pneumonia	...	...	...	—	Diphtheria	...	...	...	—
Measles	...	...	...	63	Food Poisoning	...	...	...	—
Whooping Cough	...	...	...	72	Dysentery	...	...	...	1

Tuberculosis :—

New Cases :—					Pulmonary	Non-Pulmonary
Male	...	...	...	...	11	2
Female	...	...	...	...	7	1
					—	—
					18	3
					—	—
Deaths :—						
Male	...	...	...	...	4	—
Female	...	...	...	...	1	—
					—	—
					5	—
					—	—

Yours faithfully,

S. P. STOKER,
Medical Officer of Health.

B. G. ELLIOTT,
Sanitary Inspector.

